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LETTER DATED 27 FEBRUARY 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to request that the attached note dated 27 February 1996 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Bruno RODRIGUEZ PARRILLA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Cuba
to the United Nations

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Annex

Note dated 27 February 1996 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cuba

The President of the United States held a press conference yesterday to discuss further the incident which took place last Saturday, when two pirate aircraft flying from a base in Florida again entered Cuban airspace and territorial waters and were shot down.

William Clinton first reaffirmed the main arguments, to which he did not add anything new, used by the United States to condemn the incident, and secondly, he announced the measures to be applied against our country.

As a first measure, the President pledged to reach agreement with the United States Congress, with which he has had disagreements in this regard, on the Helms-Burton bill, which is an attempt to toughen the blockade against Cuba even further.

He requested support from the United Nations Security Council in condemning and imposing sanctions against Cuba, a position which is contradictory to the fact that the United Nations General Assembly has condemned the United States economic blockade against Cuba four times.

Another of the measures was to suspend travel by Cuban-Americans to the island, an action which first affects the many Cuban families living in the United States, mainly in Florida, and secondly hurts those living in our country.

The purpose of requesting funds to increase the transmission capabilities of the misnamed "Radio Martí" is clearly contradictory to the position of some sectors in the United States that are advocating a cutback in the costs entailed by this type of interference.

Aside from the contradictory and absurd character of these measures, the biggest injustice is that they are being used against a country which is the victim of a blockade, terrorist actions and repeated and ever more insolent violations of its airspace and territorial waters.

What measures are being taken against the terrorist organizations operating in the United States that plan and carry out armed actions and violations of the airspace of a sovereign nation?

What measures are being taken against the United States authorities, which were warned on more than one occasion, and whose duty it was to prevent these flights from being carried out?

There is no reason at all to impose sanctions on Cuba.

However, the unjust and cruel measures announced by President Clinton are too weak, in the view of the ultra-right representatives of Cuban origin in the United States who, by requesting tighter sanctions, do nothing but aggravate the political climate in the United States in order to block the current President's path towards the 1996 elections.

The extreme right-wing groups in Miami and their gangs, who flout United States laws and have turned that Florida city into a private preserve, use blackmail and terror to spread their ideas. The intolerance of these ultra-right gangsters has become the prevailing mode of behaviour, just as in the worst periods of the medieval Inquisition.

According to a cable from the British news agency Reuters yesterday in Miami, the radio broadcasting stations of that city "continue to be the means of expression of the most intransigent and virulent sectors, which advocate setting fire to agencies that organize trips to Cuba, assassinating President Fidel Castro or rushing into another invasion". Spokesmen of the extreme right-wing groups, while complaining that the United States has tied the hands of the exiles, "have called for preparations for war", according to the news agency.

The cries coming from Florida are compounded by the aggressive statements made yesterday by Secretary of State Warren Christopher in El Salvador. He said that "President Clinton has not included any military action (against Cuba), but he has reserved the possibility of taking that kind of measures against the island".

More threats. More measures against the economy. More measures to tighten the blockade. More laws aimed at using hunger and sickness to force the people to yield. For the information of United States leaders and for the information of the miserable traitors from our country who are trying to collaborate with them, this is a "homeland or death" struggle.

Cuba is neither afraid of nor accepts threats. It has learned a lot about them for more than 35 years and has never trembled when confronted with them, not even when they reached the point of possible nuclear destruction. This position has been precisely delineated in the notes from the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs in recent days and was reaffirmed yesterday by the President of the National Assembly of the People's Power, Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, at a press conference.

Moreover, the clear and invariable position of our small country has also had, on this occasion, the backing of the most diverse organizations in various regions of the world.

Now, after the incidents, we hear expressions of regret for the loss of human lives, but the painful reality is that, at a time when the pirate air incursions could have been discouraged, prohibited and stopped by those capable of doing so, the repeated warnings were ignored, and some quarters even applauded these irresponsible adventures.

These actions are taking place as we are about to commemorate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Victory of Playa Girón, and we have taken the full and unyielding decision to face and again crush any similar or greater attacks, if the circumstances so warrant, under the constant premise that we are waging a defensive war which will never end with the aggressors' success.

The fighting and victorious spirit of our people is impervious to any threat.